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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

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Wednesday, 20 July 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wittig	(Germany)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Čolaković
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Impact of climate change

Letter dated 1 July 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/408)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Impact of climate change

Letter dated 1 July 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/408)

The President: I wish to welcome the Secretary-General, the President of the Republic of Nauru and the Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs of Australia. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject being discussed.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mexico, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, Turkey, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, Acting Head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/408, which contains a letter dated 1 July 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: I thank the German presidency of the Security Council for having organized this very important meeting at this juncture.

When the Security Council first took up the issue of climate change in 2007 (see S/PV.5663), the debate was preceded by a vigorous exchange about whether such consideration was appropriate. I argued then, and do so again today, that it is not only appropriate, it is essential. I welcome the fact that we have moved forward and are having the right debate today, about what the Council and all Member States can do to confront the double-barrelled challenge of climate change and international security.

We must make no mistake. The facts are clear. Climate change is real, and it is accelerating in a dangerous manner. It not only exacerbates threats to international peace and security, it is a threat to international peace and security.

Extreme weather events continue to grow more frequent and intense, in rich and poor countries alike, not only devastating lives but also infrastructure, institutions and budgets — an unholy brew that can create dangerous security vacuums. Pakistan, the Pacific islands, Russia, Western Europe, the Philippines, Colombia, Australia, Brazil, the United States, China, the Horn of Africa are examples that should remind us of the urgency of what we face.

Just today, the United Nations declared a state of famine in two regions of southern Somalia. Around the world, hundreds of millions of people are in danger of going short of food and water. That undermines the most essential foundations of local, national and global stability. Competition between communities and countries for scarce resources, especially water, is increasing, exacerbating old security dilemmas and creating new ones. Environmental refugees are reshaping the human geography of the planet, a trend that will only increase as deserts advance, forests are felled and sea-levels rise. Mega-crises may well become the new normal. Those are all threats to human security, as well as to international peace and security.

Since I delivered my report (A/64/350) to the General Assembly in 2009, the international community has reached certain agreements, in Copenhagen and Cancún, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Those agreements provide an important, but incomplete, foundation for action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enabling all countries to adapt. We now need accelerated operationalization of all the agreements made at Cancún, including on protecting forests, adaptation and technology.

Climate finance, the sine qua non for progress, must move from a conceptual discussion to concrete delivery of fast-start financing and agreement on sources of long-term financing. The next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Durban in December, must be decisive in that regard. Minimalist steps will not do.

Negotiations cannot stop there. We need ambitious targets that ensure that any increase in global average temperature remains below 2° C. The Durban meeting must provide a clear step forward on mitigation commitments and actions by all parties according to their responsibilities and capabilities. Developed countries must lead, while at the same time emerging economies must shoulder their fair share. We cannot ignore history. But we must clearly recognize that there can be no spectators when it comes to securing the future of our planet.

Given that the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol expires next year, a political formula must be found without delay to ensure that existing commitments and needed future commitments and actions are not delayed by negotiating gamesmanship.

The Security Council can play a vital role in making clear the link between climate change, peace and security. The members of the Council bear a unique responsibility to mobilize national and international action to confront the very real threat of climate change and the specific threats to international peace and security that derive from it. Of course, nothing would build a more lasting foundation for a peaceful world than securing sustainable development for all of our citizens.

In this regard, I urge all United Nations Member States to fully utilize the opportunity provided by next year's United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. In Rio, we need to close the gaps between energy security, food and nutrition security, water security, climate security and development so that all our peoples can enjoy prosperity, peace and international security.

I thank you again, Sir, for having organized this debate and for lending the political weight of the Security Council to raising awareness of this important issue. I have called climate change the defining issue of our time. Indeed, we must go even further. We must make sustainable development for all the defining issue of our time, because it is only in that broader framework that we can address climate change and the needs of our citizens. Rewriting this history falls to us all.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Steiner.

Mr. Steiner: It is my privilege this morning to address the Security Council from the perspective of the knowledge, the science and the expertise we have acquired over a period of roughly 30 years in terms of understanding the significant and profound implications of climate change. What do we know today and what do we not know yet about the implications and impacts of climate change and how the world needs to prepare for changes that are now on the horizon and which, perhaps, to modern civilization are of an unprecedented nature in terms of the time, the scale and the implications across the planet?

For the international community, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) remains the first point of reference in terms of determining what it is that science can tell us today and what it is that science cannot yet tell us. I want to reassure the Council once again that, despite some of the discussions that occurred around some of the IPCC reports, what remains without contest is that the IPCC's *Fourth Assessment Report* is a document that is uncontested in terms of the international peer review, and that it speaks very clearly, first, to the fact that climate change is happening. Not only is it happening; it is also accelerating. Not only is it accelerating, but indeed the latest science being published by scientific institutions across the planet is in many respects overtaking the rather conservative scenarios, predictions and models that the IPCC brought to our attention four years ago.

Whether we look at the linear warming trend over the past 50 years — on average, 0.13°C warming per decade, which is nearly twice the temperature increase we have seen over the past 100 years; whether we look at the increase in terms of extreme weather events, such as storms and cyclones; whether we look at the thermal expansion of oceans; or whether we look at the melting of the Arctic summer ice, none of these are speculative data about the fact that a changing climate is a reality today. These are proven trends.

The limitations of our knowledge still lie today in interpreting, first of all, the implications of these changes for our weather systems, ecosystems and, indeed, atmospheric response mechanisms. Science cannot yet tell us everything about these factors. Indeed, where the IPCC found itself in more challenging territory — as all science does, because perfect knowledge has rarely been the foundation of human understanding — is in trying to understand the future. Clearly, here science is far from being able to capture the complexity of how our climate systems work, how the atmosphere and the biosphere interact, or how ocean, marine and terrestrial ecosystems will respond to these different trends.

But as we have seen, and as almost every day that passes brings new consolidation of our science, there is no question in the minds of those who have studied this subject with great intensity — across institutions north and south, east and west; whether from a natural science perspective, an economic science perspective or a social science perspective — the nature and scale of these changes are of such a degree that we cannot simply view them as a challenge of changing our energy systems or adjusting our transport economy. It is in fact a series of developments that are triggering responses and impacts far beyond any single sector of our economies and societies.

Let me just point out that, while we are still struggling with finding a way in which we can stay within the 2°C realm — which was an emerging consensus in the international community around the climate change negotiations — the latest projections that we are receiving from scientists for certain parts of the world are talking about 3°C and 4°C scenarios this century. This means that the world is confronting a global warming scenario that is already well beyond where we believe we might be able to manage these changes and trends if we are able to conclude our negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme has also predicted that sea-level rise is likely to reach 1 metre by the end of this century. The IPCC erred on the conservative side in its *Fourth Assessment Report* when it spoke about 0.18 to 0.59 metres — roughly half a metre maximum — in sea-level rise. We are now talking about a 1-metre sea-level rise possibly occurring this century.

If we look at a world map and we realize how many tens of thousands of kilometres of coastline will be affected by this, and how in a sense we will redraw the world map not only in geographical terms but also in terms of exclusive economic zones and many other implications, we begin to realize that we are now truly confronted with a level of scientific knowledge that is sufficient for us to begin to realize that we are talking about major implications, not only in a territorial sense, but also from a geopolitical perspective. Indeed, not long ago the Royal Society of the United Kingdom published another report that stated that the worst-case scenario under current conditions could be a 4°C warming by 2060.

I do not want to delve further into the science; I have cited many other examples in my written statement. I simply wanted to tell the Council that when we talk about the changing climate today, it is already a fact. We know enough about what is happening, but we do not yet know enough about how fast and in how many different domains it will manifest itself. Perhaps most important, we have not yet well understood the implications of these changes for our societies, our economies and the Earth's life-support systems.

That is why I believe that the term "threat multiplier", which perhaps has a strong connotation for defence establishments and analyses, is not irrelevant to a review of the implications of a changing climate upon the international peace and security context. As the Secretary-General just said, as we in the international community and as nation States seek to move forward on the path towards sustainable development, what we are confronted with today is the fact that there are a number of threats that are beginning to undermine the tenuous gains we have made in terms of sustainable development. As a global economy and a global community, we are confronted

with scenarios of natural resource scarcities, droughts and floods, and corresponding instabilities in global markets for food and other commodities that are putting into question some of the gains that we have achieved in sustainable development in recent decades.

In fact, natural disasters are fundamentally disruptive events, and if some of the scenarios that the IPCC and many scientists have drawn up hold true, then the scale, number and nature of these natural disasters will increase exponentially. If we go back to Hurricane Mitch in Honduras, the President of that country at that time called it the biggest disaster in the history of the nation, with 50 years of development lost literally in a matter of hours. Some 70 per cent of the country's infrastructure was destroyed, and therefore the maps that the country used for settlements, towns and roads had to be basically redrawn.

We are all familiar with the natural disasters that are occurring across the planet — be they floods in Pakistan or the drought to which the Secretary-General just referred — and that are occurring in ever-faster patterns in regions such as the Horn of Africa. We can see that their impact in terms of the number of people affected and the ability of societies to cope with these natural disasters is increasing every day. The Norwegian Refugee Council has estimated that, in the year 2010, 42 million people were displaced by natural disasters and that 90 per cent of those disasters were in fact related to weather-related extremes, such as floods and droughts. These are just the officially captured numbers. They do not give even a sense of the human tragedy or the rebuilding efforts that are required in that context.

I would also like to refer to the notion of food security as not just being a matter of having food available. We know today that an extreme weather event in one part of the world can change the global commodity markets overnight and literally price tens of millions of people out of the market for food. This is how interconnected our global economy is today. Food insecurity is predicted to increase in prevalence and magnitude in the coming decades. Clearly, if we are unable to feed ourselves and to have food available where it is needed at an affordable price, the result will be major social instability and disruption.

Climate science is advancing by the day. Recently, a report was published that analysed 20,000 African maize trials from recent decades. The results were that in a 1 °C warming scenario, roughly 65 per cent of Africa's existing growing areas would suffer yield losses within this century. Viewing the ramifications and implications from any angle, we have to recognize that such trends are disruptive to the sustainable development paths of nations and to the economic, social and environmental stability of our societies, our economies and our planet. Moreover, they are disruptive in part because we cannot predict their magnitude.

On that subject, I want to recall two very important concepts in the science emerging in climate change: the notions of tipping points and feedback mechanisms. One of the most unsettling aspects of trying to understand these planetary systems is that we cannot assume linear developments. We cannot assume that with a certain number of years passing with a certain degree of global warming certain things will occur.

In our Earth's natural systems, there are tipping points. Brazil's environmental protection agency published a study about two years ago that looked at the implications of 2 °C, 3 °C and 4 °C warming scenarios for the Amazon. Ecologically speaking, what emerged from that research is that, at a certain point of warming, an entire ecosystem ceases functioning in the way that is functions today, not only in terms of the biodiversity of the ecosystem itself. In the case of the Amazon, it is the world's largest water pump. The entire hydrological cycles of significant parts of South America depend on how the systems of the Amazon function.

The second concept I want to recall is feedback mechanisms. If indeed Arctic melt continues to occur and if permafrost continues to melt in the tundra, old carbon will be released that is currently stored in those soils. According to one report, there is evidence that an amount of carbon equivalent to 270 years of emissions at today's level could be released by the end the century — a secondary effect of the increase in temperatures leading to the melting of the permafrost.

Another example is glacial melt. Across the globe, whether it is in the Hindu Kush, the Andes or Central Asia, glacial melt occurring as a result of climate change and global warming has the effect of disrupting the hydrological cycles and the flows around which societies have developed their agriculture, infrastructure and settlements. It also calls into

question the arrangements that nations have developed about how to share water resources. There are 145 countries with more that one trans-boundary river that they share. Scarcity of access to water resources is already beginning to be an issue of tension between communities within nations and internationally between nations. The research on glacial melt done at Beijing University and other institutions in China indicates that, in the headwaters of the Yangtze basin, there is a significant reduction in the area covered by glaciers, which will determine future water flows and availability.

The implications of what I am describing are so profound that the recognition of climate change as a factor in the future stability, cooperation and security of our planet is not an academic matter. I say this fully aware of the debate that Member States have had on the role of the Security Council. I do not wish to pronounce myself on that issue because it is not my place to do so. I do, however, want to speak today for an entity within the international system and the United Nations.

I hope that historians in 50 years looking back at the decisions we are making today will see an international community using the knowledge available — including unavoidable uncertainties — to address cooperatively a phenomenon that, as I said earlier, is unprecedented in its implications for civilization. The simultaneous nature and the degree and scale of the changes that we will have to accommodate, adapt to and deal with represent a great threat on many fronts. However, if addressed by the international community with appropriate measures, they also represent an opportunity to transition not only towards a low-carbon economy, but also towards a more stable mechanism for international cooperation.

The sustainable development paths of individual nations are today predicated on the ability of the international community to act collectively. Many of the sustainable development objectives, ambitions and pathways that nations have pursued are under threat beyond what traditionally have been the means of a national sovereign State to determine policies within its territory. If we take into account food insecurity, natural disasters and the potential for conflict and tensions over ever more scarce resources, together with displacement and the potential disappearance of entire nation States from our world map — including their culture, identity and sovereignty — within a time span of 50 to 100 years, we have to recognize that climate change is an issue that needs to be viewed not just from a scientific and technological perspective of managing carbon emissions, but truly from a geopolitical and security perspective. Our response will either unite us in cooperative action or divide us and lead us into chaos, tension and potential conflict.

The President: I thank Mr. Steiner for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Longer versions of statements may of course be distributed in writing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): I want to thank the Secretary-General and Executive Director Steiner for their excellent and very important statements this morning.

The United States welcomes today's debate, and we are grateful to Germany for its leadership in convening this critical and timely discussion, which aims to place climate change squarely on the global security agenda.

President Obama was clear at the Secretary-General's summit on climate change nearly two years ago when he said that the security and stability of every nation and every people are in jeopardy. Our prosperity, health and safety are in peril. Time is not just moving ahead; time is running out. Climate change has very real implications for peace and security. Its effects are as powerful as they are complex, and many of them are already upon us. In many regions, climate change is already reducing the availability of food and water, threatening biodiversity and disrupting sea levels and weather patterns. As more powerful and frequent storms and floods lash coastlines and uproot populations, climatic changes can put even more pressure on scarce resources and expose vulnerable communities to greater instability.

As too often happens, the most vulnerable will be the hardest hit. Post-conflict countries already struggle to rebuild their infrastructure, strengthen their institutions and overcome instability. Now, they must often grapple with extreme weather and protracted

drought, which can drive already strained systems to buckle. Climate change can also slow or even reverse crucial development gains for ordinary citizens trying to break free of the shackles of poverty.

Climate change can further erode State capacity, especially in fragile States already vulnerable from past conflict, poverty, upheaval or disaster. As sea levels rise, small island States may well see their territory quite literally drowned, raising the spectre of new and previously unimagined forms of statelessness.

We have just witnessed the birth of the world's newest nation, the Republic of South Sudan. South Sudanese leaders now tell us that agricultural production is one of their highest priorities as they work to consolidate peace. Yet that challenge is magnified by the unfolding humanitarian disaster caused by severe drought in the wider Horn of Africa. Let us remember that in the Sudan a decade ago, drought and rapid desertification are widely thought to have contributed to the conflict and the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, as they did a decade earlier in Somalia, where drought contributed to the crisis that eventually prompted the deployment of United Nations forces, with results that we all recall.

To be sure, the mechanisms are complex and some effects of climate change are long-term, but the Security Council needs to start now, today, and in the days to come to act on the understanding that climate change exacerbates the risks and dynamics of conflict. And we need to sharpen and adapt our instruments to prevent and respond to such conflicts. The United States itself is taking important steps through a range of initiatives to work with our partners to confront the growing challenges of global poverty, food insecurity, disease, water scarcity and depleted natural resources, helping lay the foundation for a more peaceful and prosperous future for all.

Let me now address the role of the Security Council in this issue. While we recognize the essential work of the wider United Nations system and other partners in tackling the broader dimensions of climate change around the world, we also strongly believe that the Council has an essential responsibility to address the clear-cut peace and security implications of a changing climate.

In the Council, we have discussed and addressed many emerging security issues, from the links between development and security to HIV/AIDS. Yet, this week we have been unable to reach consensus on even a simple draft presidential statement that climate change has the potential to impact peace and security in the face of the manifest evidence that it does. We have dozens of countries represented in this body and in this very Chamber whose very existence is threatened. They have asked the Council to demonstrate our understanding that their security is profoundly threatened. Instead, because of the refusal of a few to accept our responsibility, by its silence the Council is saying in effect "tough luck". That is more than disappointing; it is pathetic, short-sighted and, frankly, a dereliction of duty.

The Council needs to keep pace with the emerging threats of the twenty-first century. Old threats have not disappeared, but new threats are upon us, and they demand more of us than business as usual. The Council has shown an impressive ability in the past to embrace its responsibilities to combat new peace and security threats, as it has done over the past 20 years in adapting traditional peacekeeping tools to address new and more complex political and security crises around the world.

Climate change is no different and demands nothing less. We need improved early warning systems to increase our lead time to take action. We need greater collaboration on the effects of climate change, especially at the local and regional levels, and better information about basic human needs — water, food, livelihood and energy — so that we can anticipate and prevent resource-driven conflicts. We also need to become better equipped to anticipate and prevent the risk of conflict, including by building local and national capacities to respond to climate-related threats and to prevent them through diplomacy that helps Governments manage potential disputes over scarce resources.

Our goal is clear. The Council needs to be prepared for the full range of crises that may be deepened or widened by the effects of climate change. The question is not whether we will be faced with climate-related threats, but when and how to respond. We need to be much better prepared to tackle one of the central threats of our age. It is past time for the Security Council to come into the twenty-first century and to assume our core responsibilities.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I thank the Secretary-General for being with us today and for his

remarks. I would like to welcome Mr. Achim Steiner and to thank him for his very interesting briefing. Brazil associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Brazil has a deep and long-standing commitment to combating climate change. We have translated that firm commitment into concrete actions and constructive proposals. Climate change is a complex and difficult issue. There are no shortcuts or easy solutions. The only effective way forward is to achieve an ambitious result under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol. Our efforts for mitigation and adaptation must be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. That is crucial to ensuring an equitable, balanced and effective solution.

The Security Council must take a holistic view of conflict. Violence is born not only of ethnic or religious disputes, but also of hunger, poverty and the competition for scarce resources. In some cases, the adverse effects of climate change may aggravate those disputes. However, when they do, it is not a function of climate change alone. It is usually a result of underdevelopment and lack of access to resources and technology for adaptation.

We firmly acknowledge the interdependence of development, security and human rights. The links between climate change and development and between security and development are clear and have been explicitly recognized by the United Nations. The possible security implications of climate change, however, are far less obvious. Environmental impacts do not threaten international peace and security on their own. In certain circumstances, the adverse effects of climate change may contribute to aggravating existing threats to international peace and security.

The rather indirect relationship between security and climate change in no way diminishes the urgency of supporting countries and populations that are most vulnerable to climate change, in particular small island developing States, many of which face truly existential challenges. Such challenges require political, economic and humanitarian approaches, and not necessarily a security response.

The grave consequences of sea-level rise may lead to humanitarian catastrophes if unchecked. The United Nations, under the UNFCCC, must work to strengthen prevention and to build resilience through adaptation. Humanitarian instruments need to be further developed in order to address the specific nature of the impacts of sea-level rise on populations.

In that context, I recognize and welcome the presence of His Excellency the President of Nauru, Mr. Marcus Stephen. We acknowledge his concerns and the untiring efforts of his country and of the other small island developing States in bringing the issue of sea-level rise to the forefront of the international agenda. Brazil expresses its full solidarity with them. We agree with them that expressions of concern or political declarations are no substitute for concrete action. We need to do more, and to do it faster. Climate change negotiations must yield significant results to curb emissions in a balanced and fair manner. Adaptation programmes must be prioritized and sufficiently funded.

The issue of food security is high on Brazil's agenda. At the international level, we must all support the leading role of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme. We must redouble our efforts to eliminate the scourge of hunger. Effective political will is needed to improve market access to food products from developing countries by reducing agricultural subsidies and bringing the Doha Round to a successful conclusion. Efforts must also be made to boost productivity in developing countries, particularly in Africa. Where food insecurity contributes to aggravating instability in conflict or post-conflict situations, the Council should coordinate its efforts with the work of other relevant actors within the United Nations system and the World Bank.

The United Nations system has the necessary tools to deal with the challenges associated with fighting climate change. The wealth of knowledge, experience, political leverage and legal instruments that the system possesses must be used to its full capacity.

Security tools are appropriate to deal with concrete threats to international peace and security, but they are inadequate to address complex and multidimensional issues such as climate change. Effectively fighting climate change and dealing with its myriad implications must be a priority for the international community. To do so, we must take full advantage of all of the tools that the United Nations

system has to offer, especially in the area of sustainable development, and redouble our efforts to achieve ambitious results in the international negotiations on climate change.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Steiner, for his briefing. China supports the statement to be made by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Global climate change is a common challenge of all countries that is profoundly affecting human survival and development. In recent years, all countries have made efforts towards protecting the global environment and responding to climate change, with notable results. But resolving climate change and achieving sustainable development remain pressing and long-term tasks that require all countries to continue their mitigating efforts.

Responding to climate change is in the interest of all countries worldwide, in particular of the majority of developing countries and for the well-being of their peoples. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol have been commonly accepted as major channels for responding to climate change. The principle of common but differentiated responsibility has become a basis for all parties to strengthen cooperation. Sustainable development and harmony between human beings and nature have common goals for all parties.

Climate change may affect security, but it is fundamentally a sustainable development issue. The Security Council lacks expertise in climate change and the necessary means and resources. Moreover, the Council is not a forum for decision-making with universal representation. Its discussions are not aimed at putting together a broadly accepted programme, nor can they take the place of the UNFCCC negotiations among the 193 United Nations Member States.

It is the general belief of the majority of developing countries that the Council's discussion on climate change will neither contribute to the mitigation efforts of countries nor assist affected countries in effectively responding to climate change. This reasonable concern should be fully understood and respected.

In responding to climate change, the international community should give full consideration to the developing countries' stages of development and their basic needs and take note of their difficult situations. It should listen to their voices, respect their demands and effectively carry out its own commitments relating to capital, technology and capacity-building.

China attaches great importance to the concerns of the small island developing States on climate change. As a country with many islands, China has compassion for the difficulties encountered by small island developing States in their efforts towards sustainable development. The international community should adopt effective measures to assist small island developing States in responding to the challenges of climate change. Developed countries should especially carry out their commitments on capital, technology and capacity-building.

China would like to work together with small island developing States to continue to actively implement the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in order to facilitate sustainable development around the world.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the German delegation for organizing this important and timely debate. I would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, for their briefings today.

In an increasingly interdependent and interconnected world, changes due to growing populations or increasing demands for natural resources have the potential to aggravate social tensions, political unrest and conflict. The Council's main responsibility, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, clearly entails the prevention of conflict. Recognizing the imperative of security, we cannot neglect to address possible climate change security risks, whose implications are certainly a factor that should be taken into consideration.

Moreover, it is likely that the negative effects of climate change will adversely affect the most vulnerable regions and populations. It is possible that additional pressures caused by climate change will increase the risk of fragile States lapsing into conflict

or will disrupt efforts towards conflict prevention, peacebuilding or post-conflict stabilization.

In certain circumstances the adverse impact of climate change may contribute to aggravating existing threats to international peace and security. In that regard, the Security Council must be aware of the potential security implications that climate change may entail, including possible humanitarian crises, migration pressures or external shocks for States most heavily affected by climate change. As well, the mandates and responsibilities of relevant United Nations bodies addressing the issue of climate change must be respected, specifically of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The importance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a key instrument for addressing climate change cannot be overemphasized. In the same vein, the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries on an effective and appropriate international response based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility while respecting existing institutional arrangements.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the view that a coherent, integrated and holistic response by the United Nations is the only way to meaningfully contribute towards a response to this issue. In the same vein, we believe that the Secretary-General, when appropriate, should alert the Security Council to climate-related crisis situations that may imperil peace and security. It is crucial that relevant United Nations bodies strengthen their capacities to deal with different crises, including those resulting from climate change. Their efforts should be focused on predicting, preventing or handling climate change-related issues. In that context, assisting countries to manage external stresses and low adaptive capacity is vital.

We consider that stronger support for climate change adaptation in developing countries, including through investment in capacity-building at all levels, is necessary. When national capacities are insufficient, underdeveloped or overstretched by natural disasters or other hazardous events, the international community's response must be unwavering and adequately supported. Developed countries must also do more to meet their international commitments to development assistance. We believe that mainstreaming climate change within the relevant bodies of the United Nations and their activities should be continued and strengthened. Furthermore, improving the flow of information, sharing early warning assessments and exchanging data between regional and international organizations are essential.

In conclusion, climate change is a global challenge that can be tackled only at the global level. No country can deal with this problem alone. All actors must therefore work in a concerted manner and fully implement their commitments and responsibilities. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a party to the UNFCCC and as a country that has ratified the Kyoto Protocol, stands ready to contribute to that endeavour.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate and for the concept paper circulated by your delegation(S/2011/408, annex). I also thank the Secretary-General and Mr. Achim Steiner for their perceptive and inspiring statements. This debate is timely in that it affords us the opportunity to evaluate progress in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, conventions and protocols that frame our response to climate change. Through this discussion, we can also contribute effectively to preparations for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

The challenges posed by climate change are immense and the consequences for peace and security wide-ranging. Every aspect of our lives, from food security to resource management, is threatened by this phenomenon. As we have witnessed in the current food crisis in the Horn of Africa, threats to water management, animal health and crop production are magnified by political instability and insecurity. Scarcity breeds fear, which in turn fuels conflict. This chain reaction demands vigilance on the part of the Security Council. Unless we take concerted action to mitigate and adapt, the risks will only increase. For example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has estimated that a 1-metre sea-level rise could flood 18,000 square kilometres of Nigeria's coastal land, damage assets valued at $89 billion, and force the relocation of up to 5 million Nigerians. The cost of protecting Nigeria from such a rise in sea levels is estimated at $3 billion.

On the basis of those facts, we are gravely concerned about the potential impact of changing climate conditions. Nigeria is working with bilateral

and multilateral partners at the regional and international levels to identify solutions to these challenges. My Government has also sought to mainstream its mitigation and adaptation strategies with development policies aimed at significantly reducing carbon emissions and sustaining its campaign against desertification.

Nigeria remains committed to the Millennium Development Goals and the Green Wall Sahara (Nigeria) Programme, which seeks to ensure sustainable consumption and production. We have initiated mechanisms to address the issue of gas flaring, firmly determined to progressively transform it into liquefied gas processing. We are engaging in research on methods of carbon-dioxide reduction in petroleum products.

While we recognize that not every nation is equipped to implement root-and-branch policy change, it is important that every nation, no matter how small, play a small part. My delegation is concerned about the slow rate of progress in achieving agreement on implementing international climate change mitigation agreements. Nations have too often failed to honour their commitments to such frameworks, and such failures have reverberations everywhere. In many cases, the efforts of developing countries and small island developing States to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change are undermined by natural disasters and often by conflict. Our struggle to protect our climate should therefore reflect the additional challenges faced by such nations, and should feature in our wider peacebuilding frameworks.

I firmly believe that if we can support political stability, we can create the space for long-term capacity-building and the embedding of best practices and national policies for climate change. The United Nations system is uniquely placed to guide the implementation of the existing commitments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Mauritius Declaration.

Seated around this table are those who could encourage developed countries to implement their commitments to reducing emissions and supporting developing countries with the requisite technological and financial assistance to address climate change effectively. Nigeria therefore calls for enhanced efforts for the equitable distribution of adaptation funds and capacity-building programming, as well as promotion of the Global Environment Facility programme steered by the United Nations Development Programme.

Our response to climate change must be rooted in political and technological innovation. Our response to climate change should not be any less strong in the field of sustainable development. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Environment Programme are credible and concrete platforms for effectively discussing and adopting appropriate measures for dealing with climate change. I want to reiterate my Government's commitment to relentlessly supporting, promoting and fulfilling all regional and international obligations for mitigating climate change in a collective effort that seeks to ensure the well-being of present and future generations. We will be steadfast in the collective effort that seeks to ensure that peace and stability are maintained in the world.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): The impacts of climate change are keenly felt around the world. Today, we are discussing the implications of climate change for international peace and security. We are grateful to the German presidency for bringing this important question to the Council. The number of countries speaking in this debate is a graphic demonstration of its significance, and I particularly want to thank the Secretary-General and Mr. Achim Steiner for their powerful contributions to our discussion.

Scientific evidence suggests that the effects of climate change will include more droughts, shorter growing seasons and more frequent extreme weather events. Those will be felt most keenly in areas of the world already experiencing stress from shortages of food, water and energy. It is just those areas where Governments do not always have the capacity to respond. It is in that context that climate change must be seen as a threat multiplier, exacerbating existing tensions and increasing the likelihood of conflict.

As a result of climate change, crop yields are predicted to fall in the long term. This will have serious repercussions for communities dependent on agriculture. At the same time, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has estimated that global demand for food will increase by up to 70 per cent by 2050. Weaker production coupled with greater

demand will affect all countries. In areas where food security is already a source of instability, this impact of climate change has the obvious potential to fuel tension.

We have also heard this morning about the impacts of the rise of sea levels caused by climate change. These will be felt most acutely in low-lying and small island developing States. I welcome the fact that representatives of so many of those countries affected in the Pacific will participate in today's debate.

Resource scarcity, flooding and drought all are likely to result in significant movements of people, in some cases across national boundaries, as we are seeing today in the Horn of Africa. Where people move to areas that do not themselves have sufficient resources or infrastructure to accommodate them, the risk of tension and conflict is increased.

Some delegations have voiced concerns over the Council's mandate to discuss this issue. We agree that it is important that the different roles, functions and mandates of the various United Nations bodies dealing with climate change are fully respected. But like the Secretary-General and Mr. Steiner, we do not believe that this debate in any way undermines them.

The Council is tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security. It can and indeed should, therefore, consider emerging threats. Conflict prevention is a key element in the Council's work. The United Kingdom believes that it is through discussion and better awareness of new and cross-cutting security challenges, including the effects of climate change, that the Council can best fulfill its responsibility to prevent future conflict.

We therefore hope that even at this late stage we can reach agreement on the presidential statement drafted by the German presidency. This would send a powerful signal of the importance that the Security Council places on mitigating the security risks posed by climate change. History will not judge us kindly if, through complacency or ideology, we duck this important responsibility.

There are three key areas on which we should focus if we are to be effective in mitigating the security implications of climate change.

First, and pre-eminently, the United Nations must continue to work to achieve a comprehensive, globally binding agreement on climate change. Ongoing efforts under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are crucial. The United Kingdom will do everything in our power to support preparations for the 17th Conference of the Parties in Durban, to be held later this year, including by supporting the South African presidency.

Secondly, we need to build up a deeper understanding of the interface between the impacts of climate change on the one hand and conflict drivers on the other. We then need to capture this understanding as we build the tools and take the action necessary to prevent conflict.

Finally, we need better sharing of analysis and experience among the various United Nations agencies, bodies and programmes that are already considering these issues. As food, water, energy and climate security are interlinked, they demand a coordinated response.

Left unchecked, climate change increases the likelihood of instability, resource conflict and poverty. That is why the United Kingdom first brought this issue to the Council for debate in 2007. It is ever more relevant and valuable for the Council to consider these impacts, and I thank Germany once again for having convened this debate today.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his statement, and to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Steiner, for his assessment.

Russia has always viewed combating global climate change as a priority area for international cooperation. We have consistently advocated, and continue to advocate, the drafting and implementation of a global instrument covering all countries, particularly the largest emitters, and that greater account be taken of the potential of Russian forests to act as a carbon sink. The constructive nature of Russia's policy in this area is reflected in its announcement that it would reduce, by 2020, greenhouse-gas emissions by 10 to 25 per cent compared to 1990, within the framework of a new universal climate agreement.

However, we also believe that a particular role in humankind's transition to a non-carbon economy should be played by nuclear energy, on whose

development Russia will continue to focus, while, of course, improving safety systems at nuclear reactors and power stations. We would suggest that the review now under way within the United Nations on the issue of climate change allows us to respond to emerging threats in this area.

We are also convinced that the priority role in this area lies, and should continue to lie, with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as the universal mechanism for combating global climate change. The Convention has the necessary and sufficient mechanisms to develop both an effective international climate regime over the longer term and specific measures to respond effectively to new threats in this area.

We share the concern of small island developing States, in particular those situated in the Pacific Ocean, about the continuing rise in sea levels. We welcome the participation in this meeting of the President of Nauru, Mr. Stephen, whose country is faced with such a challenge. We believe that in order to properly address this problem, we must effectively use the existing potential of the Convention on Climate Change, the most fundamental area of which is that of adaptation, including through the Adaptation Fund. We call on all interested donor countries to consider the possibility of providing, on an urgent and targeted basis, aid to the countries concerned for the purpose of adaptation.

Given this, Russia is sceptical about the repeated attempts that have been made to place on the agenda of the Security Council the issue of the threat posed by climate change to international peace and security. As a compromise, we agreed to join the consensus when General Assembly resolution 63/281, on climate change and its possible security implications, was adopted. While we recognize the Security Council's prerogatives as the body that has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, we believe that referring to that resolution to justify consideration of this issue in the Council is not right. The resolution was the outcome of months of difficult negotiations in which all States Members of the United Nations participated and reflects the fact that many countries are not prepared to see the issue of climate placed on the agenda of the Council.

We would also suggest that the report of the General Assembly (A/64/350) bearing the same title and drafted pursuant to that resolution does not contain serious arguments to support the position of those States advocating that this issue be placed on the Council's agenda. The report refers only to hypothetical impacts of climate change on security and is not able to precisely predict them. It fails to provide empirical data establishing any correlation between these phenomena. Although it contains very balanced conclusions and recommendations on further work in this area, it is very telling that the Security Council is not once referred to in the report.

On that basis, we believe that involving the Security Council in a regular review of the issue of climate change would bring no added value whatsoever and would merely lead to a further politicization of the issue and increased disagreements among countries, which would be an extremely undesirable outcome, particularly in the wake of the successful conclusion of the Conference of Parties held in Cancún and before the Durban Conference.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, and Germany for having convened this open debate and for your great efforts and work to underscore and promote the importance of this topic. I also wish to welcome the President of Nauru, His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, and to express our solidarity with him and his concerns.

The statements made by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, were very illuminating and important, and underscored the scale of the issues we must address when it comes to climate change.

Climate change as a global phenomenon affecting present and future generations is undoubtedly one of the greatest challenges in the history of humankind. Its impact today has consequences for almost all activities around the world, from life itself, desertification and rising sea level to the food supply, migration and the destruction of biodiversity. It is clear that action must be taken through the appropriate bodies and contexts, among which the reduction of man-made gas emissions is crucial. There are no excuses for the leading producers of man-made gas emissions failing to assume their responsibility before the world. There is also a need to provide for the transmission and transfer of clean new technologies and for access to markets on equal terms, as well as to protect biodiversity. These

are concepts related to the debate on the right to development, which is a legitimate aspiration that cannot be renounced.

The increase in temperature, the severe variations in historical patterns of rainfall, the increase in the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and typhoons, are forcing serious discussion in the appropriate forums on the measures to be taken to adapt our societies to climate change.

Against that backdrop, Colombia believes that there are immediate challenges that must be considered in the Security Council. While the responses needed to minimize the effects of climate change are not within the mandate of the Council, we believe that this organ does have a responsibility to play a role in cases and conflict situations on its agenda when those are exacerbated by the effects of climate change, with a view to providing humanitarian protection measures, which we believe should not extend to other issues. Moreover, the Security Council should help to address this problem in a context of trust among countries, based on respect for the mandates of the respective bodies of the international system.

Several decades ago, we aspired to an integrated vision of progress, which we called sustainable development. That goal has proved elusive because our societies and economies are based on short-term, sector-specific and immediate approaches. The problems resulting from climate change must, in our view, be addressed in a comprehensive way, encompassing all the spheres and structures of human activity and the need to adopt new behaviours. It is a challenge for which most countries, which have only barely made progress on various fronts of development, are not prepared.

How should we prioritize resources and efforts? How should we address the problems of disappearing coastlines, overflowing rivers, melting glaciers, expanding deserts and successive freezes and droughts? No single country, group of countries or specific body has the answers. Just as curbing and reducing greenhouse gas emissions will require coordinated action at the global level, responding to the impacts of climate change will also require concerted international action.

Colombia has just suffered two atypical cold spells, unprecedented in our history, whose destruction experts estimate at 10 times that wrought by Hurricane Katrina. We had to mobilize extra resources and turn to international assistance to mitigate the damage and destruction and ensure the well-being of the population affected. The integrity of natural ecosystems we depend on was seriously affected.

The problem is therefore not only a matter for future generations; it is a reality facing us today. The survival of millions of people depends on action based on international solidarity to reduce gas emissions, to ensure access to food, to positively respond to migration forced by climate impacts, disease and pest vectors, infrastructure investment, the disappearance of thousands of species, ocean acidification and the inequitable distribution of fresh water worldwide, among many other serious situations.

Colombia clearly has the political will to work together to safeguard our planet. We believe that collective commitment is needed to achieve sustainable development in peace and prosperity.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Since the last debate in the Council on climate change was in 2007 (see S/PV.5663), science has progressed, the facts have been confirmed and the risks have been further analysed, as Mr. Steiner set out in his statement. I therefore pay tribute to the German presidency of the Security Council for the initiative to hold a debate on the impact of climate change on international peace and security.

The climate threat concerns us all. It is, in particular, a threat for our small island Pacific State partners, whose very existence is in peril, as is the survival of their territory, culture and identity. The President of the Republic of Nauru, Mr. Marcus Stephen, whose presence I welcome in the Council today, is better placed than I to speak about the immense challenges affecting the islands of his region. I regret enormously that we cannot respond to his appeal.

In addition, agricultural productivity is under threat. My country has made food security a priority of its presidency of the Group of 20. How can we maintain international peace and security if a situation of chronic food shortages sets in?

It is also a threat in terms of water resources in regions where these are rare, and generates tension.

How can we ensure appropriate management if they become yet scarcer?

It is also a menace for the viability of coastal regions, where more than one third of the world population lives.

The facts are clear: climate change has an immense destabilizing potential and could multiply the threats to peace and security in the most fragile regions and States.

The international community is mobilizing to tackle the various challenges posed by climate change. There is still time to avoid its worst effects, but we must act fast. There is only one way to do this, namely, international cooperation.

We must begin a new stage in formulating an ambitious multilateral response at the Durban Conference. We must give operational impetus to the agreements negotiated at Cancún. We must also safeguard the Kyoto Protocol and move towards a broader legal instrument.

We must also work to respond to sector-specific threats and promote partnerships. This is the objective of the World Water Forum, to be held in Marseille in March 2012.

Access to clean energy for all is another major priority, because development is itself a way of responding to climate change and can contribute to preventing and reducing conflicts. It is in this context that France and Kenya together launched the Paris-Nairobi Initiative last April.

Lastly, we must reinvigorate global partnerships for sustainable development and adopt, in Rio in June 2012, an ambitious road map for a global transition towards a green economy supported by solid, financially strong and effective institutions.

The international community has seen the diversity of risks related to climate change and is taking measures in various forums. In this context, the implications of climate change for maintaining international peace and security should be taken into account. In conformity with its mandate, the Security Council must therefore assume its responsibilities.

The Council is not infringing on the competence of other United Nations bodies and does not want to replace other forums, in particular that under the Convention on Climate Change. The Council today is simply facing up to a new type of threats that are multiform, complex and diffuse. In that spirit we are exploring today the implications of these threats and the Council's capacity to deal with them. Thus last February the Security Council, under the presidency of Brazil, held a useful debate on peace, security and development (see S/PV.6479). It is in the same spirit that today the Council is considering climate change — while strictly respecting its mandate and the Charter in particular in the area of preventing conflicts.

My delegation therefore regrets that the Security Council is not responding in the same way as it did in the debate on security and development. Despite the efforts by the presidency, the Council is not ready to make a collective statement today on the implications of climate change for the maintenance of international peace and security. To oppose with bureaucratic concerns the anguished appeals by our partners threatened by climate change does not rise to the issues at stake. It is not dignified.

Nevertheless, we are faced with reality. The need will remain for the Security Council to endeavour to analyze the threats and to better know the causes of conflict on which climate change will have the most immediate effects. The Council must also take account of the impact of its own decisions. For example, it must, as of today, take measures to ensure that peacekeeping operations reduce their carbon emissions and their impact on the environment. I therefore welcome the fact that the Secretariat has already taken measures in that regard.

Today's debate is just a first stage. It must be for all of us in the United Nations a call for action. The climate threat means that we must mobilize ourselves: first in the short term, to ensure the success of the Climate Conference in Durban and the Climate Change Conference in Rio; in the medium term, to prevent conflicts that could emerge; and in the long term to save the planet. My delegation is convinced that the Security Council must come back to this and in the future must express itself in a single voice. This is not over-ambitious; it is just taking account of the sad realities that we face.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban for his important introductory remarks, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Steiner, for his stimulating briefing. I also wish to thank you,

Mr. President, for organizing this debate in the Security Council on the impact of climate change in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security.

At the outset, allow me to stress, along with my partners in the Arab Group, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, that we consider, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/281, that in the United Nations system the responsibility for sustainable development issues, including climate change, is conferred upon the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the key instrument for addressing climate change.

Yet, focusing our discussion today on the potential security implications of climate change will not constitute an encroachment by the Security Council on the functions and powers of other United Nations organs, for the same General Assembly resolution, 63/281, also

> "Invites the relevant organs of the United Nations, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications".

In this same vein, in addition to increasing awareness about the potential security impact of climate change, our debate today should be viewed as an expression of complementarity in the work of the different organs of the United Nations.

There is broad agreement within the scientific community that our planet has been warming, due largely to human activities at least since the eighteenth century, and that the rate of warming in the last century was historically high. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirmed in 2007 the historic magnitude of these changes and warned of their potential impacts on the future of the Earth and its inhabitants.

As to the relationship between climate change and conflict, including armed conflict, the 2009 report of the Secretary-General (A/64/350) identified climate change as a threat multiplier exacerbating threats caused by persistent poverty and weak institutions for resource management and conflict resolution. Emerging threats related to climate change include sea-level rise, which could result in the loss of entire countries such as the small island States; accelerated desertification and erosion of agricultural land, which could lead to food insecurity, increased poverty and reverse development; migratory and displacement flows, which could become a source of social and political tensions in the neighbouring areas; and water scarcity, which could exacerbate competition over natural resources.

No region on the surface of the globe is immune. But it is important to underline that the impact of climate change will be greater where factors of fragility already exist. This is the case of the least developed countries.

The global nature of climate change requires the cooperation of all countries, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and their respective capabilities. It is also important to keep in mind that the international community cannot win the battle against the detrimental consequences of climate change without putting into action all the relevant instruments in its possession.

In this context, United Nations organs should, within their respective mandates, mobilize all their resources in the fields of mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building in order to address and reduce the negative effects of global warming. Here, the Security Council should, inter alia, play a critical role of conflict prevention in addressing, as early as possible, the potential security implications of climate change.

Mr. Mashabane (South Africa): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement this morning. Equally, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, for his extensive briefing. We welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru, in this room. His presence here today can only be a demonstration of the real challenge that sea-level rise presents to his country and to other low-lying areas.

At the outset I wish to associate my delegation with the statements to be made by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

South Africa reaffirms General Assembly resolution 63/281, which invites the relevant organs of the United Nations, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications. In that regard, the convening of this debate is timely and opportune to highlight the reality of climate change and the threat it poses to African and developing countries in general and to the small island developing States (SIDS) and least developing countries (LDCs) in particular. It is those countries who bear the disproportionate impact of climate change.

We would like to reiterate the well-known principled position of the Group of 77 and China that climate change threatens not only development prospects and the achievement of sustainable development, but also the very existence and survival of societies.

The *Fourth Assessment Report* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change makes it clear that if no action on climate change is taken in the next few years, there will be dire consequences, in particular for the small island developing States that are already experiencing slow onset effects of this phenomenon. This enjoins us to deal with this global problem in an equitable manner. In that regard, we join other delegations in calling for the full and effective implementation of the commitments under the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme.

Developing countries are working hard to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment and to improve quality of life for our people. However, we continue to be confronted by a lack of resources and are relatively less prepared to deal with the consequences of climate change. Least developed countries, especially in Africa and Asia, as well as small island developing States, cannot shoulder those costs. It is for that reason that we continue to call for, first, the scaling up of resources; secondly, the transfer of technology and, thirdly, capacity-building to help developing countries to deal with the grave consequences of climate change.

South Africa firmly believes that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol remain the best instruments to deal with the broader challenges of climate change. It is important that we all continue honour our obligations under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol if we are to effectively deal with the challenges precipitated by climate change. That has to be in accordance with the fundamental principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The UNFCCC affords all Member States, including small island developing States and LDCs, an opportunity to advance their cause while ensuring robust engagement with the partners.

The contribution that the members of the Security Council can make to these UNFCCC processes is to ensure that the architecture of the climate change regime is strengthened and not fragmented. Such a global challenge can be effectively dealt with only through a strong rules-based international system. The UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol should be strengthened, and a second commitment period should be finalized as soon as possible.

Finally, for South Africa, as President of the seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, this debate provides an opportunity to raise awareness and exchange views in order to intensify global efforts to address climate change, first as a sustainable development issue and, secondly, to re-emphasize the need to retain the climate change debate within the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol.

For our part, we will spare no effort in ensuring that the parties strive for a balanced and credible outcome in Durban that is party-driven. In that regard, we will rely on the bureau, work optimally with the secretariat of the UNFCCC and consult with the parties and their regional groups in an inclusive and transparent manner.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Combating climate change is one of the main thrusts of His Excellency President Ali Bongo Ondimba's L'avenir en confiance project. My delegation therefore fully supports Germany's initiative to have the Security Council consider, for the second time, the security implications of climate change, which is a phenomenon that has been at the heart of the international community's concerns for many years.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for their detailed statements.

As members are aware, on 17 April 2007, under the presidency of the United Kingdom, the Council held a historic debate on this important issue, focused on the issues of energy, security and climate. As witnessed by the negotiations on the draft presidential statement, which unfortunately did not enjoy consensus, many continue to express strong reservations as to the relevancy of the Security Council taking up this issue. My delegation remains convinced of the contrary.

It is increasingly clear that climate change leads to water scarcity, which is a source of tensions among riparian countries, such as those in Central Asia, and among communities in those countries. This also happens in numerous African countries. In other cases, climate change helps to exacerbate conflicts and imbalances in the world's ecosystems. Without effective cooperation, climate change could not only lead to cross-border population movements; it could also significantly contribute to making energy, biological, forest and aquatic resources even more scarce. It is precisely because of the cross-cutting nature of this phenomenon that greater involvement by the Security Council is required.

Given developments on the international stage, the maintenance of international peace and security is no longer unidimensional. The military perspective continues to be important, but it alone cannot be how we define the convergence of threats that today impact our collective security. Faced with new threats to international peace and security, the Council should have the tools to allow it to assess both the scope and gravity of a situation, and therefore to act in advance. In our view, preventive diplomacy is a tool that can help States, as part of a synergistic effort, to reduce the effects of new threats. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the considerable assistance provided to States by United Nations regional offices in developing and implementing prevention strategies.

Beyond our differences of opinion on this central issue, it is crucial that the Security Council define, in cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies, a framework for cooperation aimed at more effectively combating this phenomenon. The effects of climate change are real and are already having an impact on our daily lives. Temperatures are rising, and extreme weather events are becoming more frequent.

Owing to its low adaptation capacity, Africa is one of the continents that is most vulnerable to climate change. We draw the international community's attention to the need to help Africa to address this phenomenon. The same goes for island States, which are increasingly exposed to the devastating effects of climate change and whose survival depends upon our commitment to act with the greatest urgency. The concerns of those States will be set out in the statement to be made later by His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru, whose presence at this debate I would like to welcome.

Lastly, I would like to assure the Council that, for its part, Gabon will continue to closely associate itself with international efforts aimed at reducing the negative effects of climate change.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and Executive Director Achim Steiner of the United Nations Environment Programme for their statements. The interest and participation that today's open debate has evoked testifies to the importance that we all attach to the subject of climate change. I would therefore like to particularly acknowledge the presence of His Excellency the President of Nauru and of other dignitaries in our midst today. I look forward to hearing their views on the issue under our consideration. It is a challenge that lies at the forefront of the global development agenda and that is close to the hearts of small island States, for which it poses an existential threat.

Climate change, in an overarching sense, is beginning to impact the security of the global community in the same way as poverty, food security and underdevelopment continue to undermine international well-being. Sweeping generalizations about climate change leading to droughts, floods, changes in weather patterns, water and food scarcity, and violent conflicts are, however, yet to be fully tested against empirical and scientific analyses.

The *Fourth Assessment Report* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other scientific authorities unequivocally speak of this uncertainty. This is also corroborated by the Secretary-General's report entitled "Climate Change and its possible security implications", which concludes that

> "[w]hile climate modelling has made considerable advances in forecasting the future behaviour of natural systems over long time spans, the science of climate change and its physical impacts still confronts a number of uncertainties" (*A/64/350, para. 8*).

Sea-level rise, on the other hand, is happening. There is verifiable evidence to suggest sea-level increases of a metre or more by 2100, which could lead to the disappearance of several small island States and the submergence of low-lying coastal areas in many littoral States. We are particularly aware of its gravity, given the vulnerability of our own people living on island chains and in coastal areas. There are also issues of statelessness and the displacement of people that are deeply worrisome.

Faced with these challenges, what must the global community do? The answer quite clearly lies first and foremost in taking remedial action today rather than in focusing on the implications of such climate-induced disasters in the distant future.

The concept paper for this debate (S/2011/408, annex) states that the purpose of today's engagement is to allow the Council to deliberate the security implications of climate change, consistent with its mandate, and to advance the dialogue on this issue from the security perspective. In this context, it is worth keeping in mind that while the Security Council can debate the issue and may recognize the vulnerabilities and threats induced by climate change, it does not have the wherewithal to address the situation. The existential threat to island States or the emergence of food insecurity as a result of climate change cannot be resolved or remedied by the Council under Article 39 of the United Nations Charter. Clearly, these issues need a broader approach anchored in development, adaptive capacity, risk assessment and institutional build-up. We therefore have some difficulty in accepting the assertion that the effects of climate change go beyond the mandate of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

If we are serious about addressing the vulnerabilities arising out of climate change, then our deliberations on climate change must focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening the adaptive capacities of vulnerable countries. Our agreed global goal for climate stabilization by limiting the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above preindustrial levels needs to be backed by mitigation commitments based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and equity. Preserving the structure of the Kyoto Protocol and its second commitment period, the early disbursement of the Fast Start Finance agreed at Cancún and the operationalization of the Green Climate Fund, the Technology Mechanism and the Adaptation Committee are vital to imparting a renewed momentum to the UNFCCC process.

Those who are historically responsible for climate change must come forward with firm greenhouse gas commitments and ensure that there is adequate resource and technology flow to developing countries, in particular the small island States, to allow them to adapt to climate change. If we are successful in undertaking the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures, our preoccupations about the security implications of climate change, which in any case are yet to be fully established, would to a large extent be put to rest. This would also lighten the burden of preventive diplomacy, which has been so passionately argued for by some delegations.

In our view, what constitutes a bigger concern for international peace and security today is the threat that developing countries face from possible conflicts arising out of inadequate resources for development and poverty eradication. Sustained economic growth and development must therefore be pursued in order to allow developing countries to alleviate poverty and meet basic standards of living for all. This in itself will make them more resilient to climate change vulnerabilities.

The concept paper also highlights the vulnerability of food security while postulating its veritable nexus with climate change impact. That may well be the case. However, our recent experience of food scarcity, as arose in 2008, and high inflation this year point to the preponderance of factors far removed from climate change that are holding global food security to ransom. Agricultural protectionism, excessive speculation in food commodity trading and the diversion of crops to non-food purposes are leading us to an unsustainable global food situation. This calls for urgent global attention.

Our efforts to deliberate the possible security implications of climate change will bear fruit only if we realize where the centre of gravity on this issue lies. We must not confuse political motion with action. Climate change needs the collective understanding and support of all Member States. Action must therefore lie in the UNFCCC. When confronted with the question of an existential threat to the small island States, I am reminded of the words of Mahatma Gandhi that "all compromise is based on give and take, but there can be no give and take on fundamentals". Let us do our best for the small island States and for humankind.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Like you, Sir, I wish to warmly His Excellency the President of the Republic of Nauru to the Council. His presence does indeed illustrate the seriousness of the challenges facing his country and other small island developing States (SIDS).

I thank the German presidency and you yourself, Mr. President, for having organized this debate on the security implications of climate change, an issue to which Portugal has been strongly attached for many years. I thank the Secretary-General for his important statement, and I also wish to thank Mr. Steiner for his very useful presentation. These are indeed serious threats to some regions of our planet, as Mr. Steiner eloquently illustrated.

As I have repeatedly stated, Portugal does not see the Security Council as the forum for climate change negotiations or even for discussions on measures to mitigate and adapt to environmental vulnerabilities. These issues belong to other contexts that have the legitimacy and the appropriate tools to address them. It is, however, the Council's role to recognize and deal with new challenges and to ensure that such challenges do not lead to tensions and ultimately to conflict. Therefore, there is, in our view, an added value in the Security Council discussing the impact that certain consequences of climate change may have for international stability, peace and security. For the same reason, Portugal hopes that we may still be able to find a consensus on an outcome for our discussions today.

We strongly believe that we should be able to develop concrete strategies for coherent, integrated and comprehensive responses of United Nations institutions, including the Security Council, to address these risks. The case for such an approach is particularly relevant when it is called for by those Members of the United Nations particularly affected by climate change and whose very existence is at risk. I would like to mention again the particular case of the Pacific SIDS, for which the negative effects of climate change are no longer a possible scenario but a very concrete reality. Sea-level rise may, in time, lead to the loss of entire territories, but those island States may become uninhabitable long before that.

When that occurs, there are a number of issues that need to be answered and that have clear international implications. How do we deal with populations that need to be resettled? Where do they go? How do they get there? How does one manage and defuse the tensions that resettlement entails? How do we address the legal consequences of the loss of territory, such as the definition of borders, economic zones and continental shelf rights? Our failure to deal collectively with such questions may lead not only to humanitarian disaster but also to a surge of serious tensions in a vast region, threatening peace. I am sure that President Marcus Stephen will give us a very vivid analysis of those problems in all their complexity.

Desertification and its effects on food production and water availability should also merit our attention in this debate, since its consequences are often felt across national borders. Let us remember that 47 per cent of all land area falls within international river basins and that over 200 river basins are multinational. As water demands increase, tensions or even conflict over water resources will also increase.

Desertification and increasing food scarcity as an effect of climate change are also reasons for the involuntary displacement of populations, a link recently recognized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, in his report on climate change, natural disasters and human displacement. This is first and foremost a humanitarian and development issue but, as we are all aware, the strongest impact of desertification is felt in countries with social and economic vulnerabilities, some of them emerging from long periods of conflict and instability. If the movement of populations due to desertification has a cross-border or even a regional dimension, then it is very likely that its security implications will go beyond the borders of a particular State and may derail progress in post-conflict stabilization and peacebuilding efforts.

If properly addressed, the security challenges whose effects are amplified by climate change do not necessarily lead to conflict. As with many other issues that the Security Council discusses on a regular basis, we believe that in this domain we should likewise give priority to a preventive approach and to the development of early-warning mechanisms. We should also actively discuss the security impact of climate change with other international organizations that are already addressing the issue from a security perspective, including the European Union and the African Union. We must consider how our actions may complement and reinforce each other for a more effective response. In that context, Portugal, as a member of the European Union, naturally shares the position that will be later expressed by Ambassador Pedro Serrano on these issues. Indeed, global problems call for collective responses, and this is particularly important when resources are scarce.

In conclusion, the effects of climate change are likely to increase in the near future. What we are discussing here today as possible security implications will likely become increasingly evident. That is why we believe that today's debate should not be a one-off event, but rather a step towards a consistent and regular consideration of the issue by the Security Council, based on reliable information on specific situations where climate-related phenomena are negatively affecting peace and security. That would allow us to have a more complete understanding of the complex links between climate, development and security, and therefore strengthen our capacity to prevent conflict and promote international cooperation.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

Germany aligns itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

At the outset, I would like to join others in thanking the Secretary-General for participating in today's debate. His remarks and his presence are a strong signal of the engagement of the United Nations in the debate on climate change and its security implications. Let me also join my colleagues in thanking the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Mr. Steiner, for his insightful and very instructive briefing.

Over one year ago, the Pacific small island States urged the Security Council to consider the security implications of climate change. They appealed to the Security Council to fulfil its mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. The reason why those countries urged the Security Council to act is clear: already today they suffer from the security implications of climate change. They have to deal with rising sea levels, loss of land and increasing scarcity of resources. The Governments of those countries have to resettle their people and ensure that the distribution of basic commodities does not turn into violent fights for survival. For them the security dimension of climate change is crystal clear. It is their daily challenge.

The situation of the small island States is a compelling reason in and of itself to discuss today's matter in the Security Council. At this point, it might be useful to remember that the United Nations has always drawn its unique legitimacy from the equality of States. Big or small, rich or poor, each State has the same right for its existential fears and threats to be addressed.

There is, however, even more reason for the Council to debate the security dimension of climate change, because what happens to some small island States today might well happen to other countries tomorrow. Most national security establishments consider the threat of global warming as one of the biggest challenges of the twenty-first century. If we take a look at the conflicts on the agenda of the Council, we will easily see that quite a few of these conflicts are, already today, driven by desertification, lack of water and increased trans-border migration. We have no doubt that the environmental degradation due to climate change very often acts as a driver of conflict. We all know that conflicts of this sort do not remain isolated within a single country but, on the contrary, tend to destabilize whole regions. We should also keep in mind that not all States and societies have the same capacity to adapt to the dramatic changes in their environment.

The mandate of the Security Council is the maintenance of international peace and security. We are convinced that it is the Council's duty to act with foresight and to do its best to prevent crises before they become acute. We therefore welcome the fact that the Council has successfully debated structural aspects of conflicts before, such as the interrelatedness of development or HIV/AIDS with security.

Keeping in mind the mandate of the Security Council, we suggested that today's debate be focussed strictly on the security implications of climate change. Let me be very clear: Germany does not want the Council to infringe upon the competences of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or other United Nations organs. We did not, and do not, intend to advance any kind of encroachment.

We regret that it was not possible, at least up to now, to find agreement on an outcome document for today's meeting. I would like to reiterate that Germany has a keen interest in a Security Council that rises beyond the day-to-day management of acute crises but takes into consideration the underlying causes of conflict. It was our intention to ask the Secretary-General for a sound basis for these discussions. While we would have preferred, and still prefer, that the Council find common ground on this request, the strong interest of the membership in today's debate makes one thing clear, namely, that the Members want to see this topic on the agenda of the Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I request the Protocol Officer to escort His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru, to a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru.

President Stephen: I would like to begin by thanking Germany for hosting this important debate on climate change and its implication for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States — the region most vulnerable to climate change — namely, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and my country, the Republic of Nauru — as well as the countries of Maldives, Seychelles and Timor-Leste.

Last month, the International Energy Agency announced that in 2010 carbon dioxide emissions reached their highest level in history. Last year also tied as the hottest year on record, and the volume of Arctic sea ice dropped to its lowest level since measurements began, while catastrophic droughts, forest fires and floods wreaked havoc on countries around the world. Scientists now project that seas will rise by a metre or more by the end of the century — a level that could wipe out many small islands in the Pacific and elsewhere. All this happened despite 20 years of negotiations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a safe level.

We must now come to terms with an unsettling reality: there is so much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that serious impacts are now unavoidable, and we must prepare.

In my frustration, I often wonder where we would be if the roles were reversed. What if the pollution coming from our island nations was threatening the very existence of the major emitters? What would be the nature of today's debate be under those circumstances? But that is not the world that we live in, and this is not a hypothetical exercise for us. Many of our countries face the single greatest security challenge of all, that is, our survival. For that reason, we have come to the Security Council today.

Because of climate change, our islands face dangerous and potentially catastrophic impacts that threaten to destabilize our societies and political institutions. Our food security, water security and public safety are already being undermined. Sea-level rise is eroding our coastlines and in some cases is damaging critical infrastructure. Loss of territory could disrupt traditional systems of land ownership and spark conflicts over land and other increasingly scarce resources. Eventually, some islands may disappear altogether, and with them thousands of years of cultural heritage. That would force large numbers of our citizens to relocate, first internally, then across borders. Even with an ambitious new agreement to address climate change, many of these impacts are now unavoidable.

The Security Council has recognized that it has a role in preventing conflict before it occurs, not just in facilitating its resolution afterwards. For that reason, it has recognized the necessity of addressing the root causes of conflict, unconventional security threats that

can give rise to social tension and civil unrest, such as poverty, underdevelopment, competition over natural resources and HIV/AIDS. For such issues and others, the Security Council has evaluated the problems and, in concert with other organs of the United Nations, has deployed a variety of tools to address them.

Today, we ask no less of the Council. The international response to climate change must be comprehensive, particularly given its global nature and implications for every aspect of society.

Make no mistake: the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change — the UNFCCC — is and must remain the primary forum for developing an international strategy to mitigate climate change, mobilize financial resources, and facilitate adaptation, planning and project implementation. The General Assembly must continue to address the links between climate change and sustainable development.

Likewise, the Security Council has a clear role in coordinating a response to the security implications of climate change. In the 2009 General Assembly resolution on climate change and its possible security implications (resolution 63/281), we agreed that all relevant organs of the United Nations, within their respective mandates, should intensify their efforts to address climate change, including its possible security implication. An effective international response requires disaster planning and preparedness, detailed assessments of vulnerability and risk, more effective multilateral coordination and preventive diplomacy.

In our conversations with Security Council members, we have heard loud and clear that they understand the security challenges faced by the Pacific and other island nations and that they stand in solidarity with us. However, solidarity demands more than sympathetic words demonstrated by formally recognizing that climate change is a threat to international peace and security. It is a threat as great as nuclear proliferation or terrorism, and it carries the potential to destabilize Governments and ignite conflict. Neither nuclear proliferation nor terrorism has ever led to the disappearance of an entire nation, though that is what we are confronted with today.

The Security Council has also asked us what concrete steps it can take to address the issue. Allow me to tell it.

The Council should start by requesting the immediate appointment of a special representative on climate and security. That individual's primary responsibility should be to analyse the projected security impacts of climate change so that the Council and all Member States can understand what lies ahead. The Council should also request an assessment of the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to such impacts so that vulnerable countries can be assured that it is up to the task.

These proposals are the absolute minimum required to move the international community from a culture of reaction to one of preparedness. As the Secretary-General concluded in his report on climate change and its possible security implications, "the international community must anticipate and prepare itself to address a number of largely unprecedented challenges posed by climate change for which existing mechanisms may prove inadequate" (*see A/64/350, p.28*).

Many countries have expressed concerns about the Security Council encroaching on the mandate of the General Assembly and the UNFCCC. We understand and share this concern, which is why our proposals have been narrowly tailored to address the security implications of climate change. However, we are more concerned about the physical encroachment of the rising seas on our island nations.

We are deeply disappointed that there will be no formal outcome to this debate. Let history recall that once again we have sounded the alarm and the world chose not to act. The Security Council must reflect current geopolitical realities if it is to remain relevant, both in its membership and in the substance of its work. We applaud its recent decision to explore the security implications of such divergent topics as development; cultural and religious tolerance; HIV/AIDS; and women, peace and security. Yet the Council would render itself irrelevant if it chose to ignore the biggest security threat of our time.

Let me be absolutely clear: The security risks of climate change are all the more reason to urgently reach a legally binding agreement under the UNFCCC. The international community must work towards more ambitious emissions reductions from all major emitters. The current pledges are grossly inadequate and would condemn many small Pacific States, Members of the United Nations that belong to the

Alliance of Small Island States, and the world to a future marked by widespread conflict and unrest.

The Security Council is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security under the United Nations Charter. Representative of many of the world's current and aspiring Powers sit before me today. I urge them not to bury their heads in the sand and to seize this opportunity to lead. I implore them to fulfil their mandate by dealing responsibly with the security implications of climate change.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Marles (Australia): May I start by thanking Germany for the opportunity to address the Council on the security implications of climate change. May I also say what an honour it is for me to follow, in addressing the Council, my colleague and good friend, His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of Nauru.

Climate change is a global threat, not an abstract concern. It is already seriously affecting the planet. Carbon dioxide levels are at their highest point in more than a million years. It is an existential threat to many small island developing States and low-lying countries. The effects of climate change could reshape the future global security environment by affecting the political and social stability and economic security of vulnerable countries. Increased extreme weather events could further worsen food and water security challenges, undermine community development, compromise critical infrastructure, weaken State governance and strain social cohesion. All countries will face the adverse impacts of climate change, but the most vulnerable peoples worldwide, who are least responsible for the global challenges we are now facing, will suffer the most.

As the Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, I have travelled to some of the countries that will be most affected by climate change. Indeed, 20 of Australia's 22 closest neighbours are developing countries, most of them small island developing States.

In our region, one of the most significant impacts of climate change will likely be sea-level rise caused by a thermal expansion of the world's oceans and melting glaciers and ice caps. Sea levels may rise by up to 1 metre by the end of this century, resulting in more severe storm surges, coastal inundation and loss of territory. Never before has the international community had to grapple with the reality that islands and low-lying territories might become uninhabitable as a result of sea-level rise. For low-lying island States such as the Marshall Islands, a 1-metre rise in sea level could result in the erosion and loss of as much as 80 per cent of the nation's capital, the Marshall Islands Majuro Atoll.

When one stands on Majuro as I have, with nowhere else to go, and sees the sea on either side of that thin and flat strip of land, there is a sense of the intense vulnerability felt by those living on small islands. The sea, which is everywhere and has long been a source of food, sustenance and comfort, is being transformed into a source of anxiety and threat. In the short-to-medium term, a combination of sea-level rise, storms of greater intensity and inundation will put greater pressure on coastal settlements and may lead to further local displacements of populations. In the longer term, if internal resettlement is no longer an option, climate change could cause destabilizing population movements as peoples' lives and livelihoods are increasingly subject to risk.

Vulnerability to climate change is not limited, of course, to island countries. Drought, flooding and soil erosion exacerbated by climate change pose significant threats to agricultural productivity and food and water security in Africa and elsewhere. Desertification has already consumed significant areas of land and will continue to reduce the amount of arable land as climate change worsens.

The only way to tackle the global challenge of climate change is through robust global cooperation and strong domestic action. Both are indispensable. Both are complementary. We know that there has been some concern about where responsibility for addressing climate change lies within the United Nations system. First, let me reaffirm that, in Australia's view, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary intergovernmental instrument for addressing climate change. Australia's commitment to that process was demonstrated by our domestic policy reform inspired by the UNFCCC. On 10 July, Australian Prime Minister Gillard announced that we will legislate a carbon price to take effect from 1 July 2012. This has been a difficult political debate in Australia but a fundamentally critical piece of public policy reform. In 2020, our carbon price will have reduced Australia's

carbon pollution by 160 million tons — the equivalent of taking 45 million cars off the road by 2020.

Secondly, let me equally reaffirm our commitment to the fundamental role of the General Assembly. Its unique and indisputable legitimacy reflects the voice of its 193 members. Our commitment to that role of the General Assembly is why Australia was such a strong proponent of its resolution 63/281 in June 2009, which specifically stated that the overarching responsibility for sustainable development issues, including climate change, rests with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We considered it right and essential that this matter be first addressed by the General Assembly. It was the General Assembly that then invited all the relevant organs of the United Nations to intensify their efforts in order to consider all aspects of climate change, including its possible security implications.

In this process, it seems to us that the Security Council has a role to play as the principal organ directly responsible for maintaining international peace and security. That role includes consideration of the root causes of conflict and political and social crises. The Council addresses those issues through many topics, including, for example, poverty and HIV/AIDS. A focus on the potential security implications of climate change is therefore relevant to its mandate and does not — and should not — compete with the mandates of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

But ultimately, the question as to where the responsibility for the issue of climate change lies is an easy one. The overwhelming nature of the challenge of climate change means that the responsibility lies with all of us, in every forum. Australia remains seriously committed to helping developing countries tackle climate change. Least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa have been given the highest priority in the allocation of Australia's fast-start package because they need it most urgently. These are not the countries most responsible for the current crisis we face, but they are the countries that will bear the greatest burden. Of our $599 million fast-start funding commitment made at Copenhagen, Australia has so far allocated $498 million, more than 80 per cent.

In conclusion, Australia recognizes that climate change is a threat to the stability of individual countries and regions and has broad implications for future global security. That is why we have supported this debate. We also support calls for a report from the Secretary-General on the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to those impacts and on how that capacity can be improved. Failure to act now on the potential security implications of climate change will exacerbate risks in the future. Improving resilience, integrating climate risk into vulnerable sectors of our economies, and strengthening our disaster management capabilities are just some of the urgent responses we must make to address these security challenges. No serious Member State can deny that climate change is a primordial threat to our planet. We owe it to ourselves, to future generations, and to the future of the planet itself to anticipate and act to reduce that threat.

The President: Once again, let me remind all speakers that, in accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, statements should be limited to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Longer versions of statements can be distributed in writing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the open debate on the impact of climate change on the maintenance of international peace and security. I would like to begin by expressing the Movement's appreciation to the Secretary-General and Mr. Steiner for their statements to the Council today.

The Movement's position regarding the Security Council's repeated attempts to deal with climate change issues is reflected in a letter dated 12 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/203); in the statement delivered by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Movement at the 2007 meeting (S/PV.5663 (Resumption 1)); and in a letter dated 14 July addressed to the President from the Permanent Representative of Egypt in his capacity as current Chair of the Coordinating Board of the NAM

(S/2011/427), as well as my statement today on behalf of the Movement.

The Movement also takes note of the concerns expressed in the letter dated 1 July from the Permanent Representative of Nauru in her capacity as Chair of the group of Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), addressed to the Member States of the United Nations, and expresses its appreciation for the presence of His Excellency President Stephen of the Republic of Nauru, and for his statement on this issue on behalf of the Pacific SIDS.

General Assembly resolution 63/281 on climate change and its possible security implications recognizes the respective responsibilities of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security conferred on the Security Council, and the responsibility for sustainable development issues, including climate change, conferred on the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The final document of the Sixteenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Bali from 23 to 27 May, and General Assembly resolution 63/281 both stress that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the key instrument and central multilateral framework for addressing all aspects of climate change, and the primary forum for considering the risks associated with and the actions needed to address climate change, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Convention.

In this context, the Security Council's continued encroachment on the functions and powers of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the relevant subsidiary organs, by addressing issues that traditionally fall within the competence of those organs, remains a source of deep concern for the Movement. The Non-Aligned Movement stresses that the Security Council must fully observe all provisions of the Charter establishing the delicate balance among the competencies of all principal organs. The Movement also stresses that close cooperation and coordination among the principal organs is indispensable to enabling the United Nations to remain effective and capable of meeting existing, new and emerging threats and challenges.

The Movement also stresses that climate change and its adverse impacts must be addressed from the perspective of sustainable development, promoting a comprehensive approach to addressing the root causes of the problem. This can happen only in the relevant frameworks, which are the UNFCCC, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development. Those bodies are the most competent to address climate change and its related issues in a substantive way through due and harmonious cooperation in dealing with situations arising from the consequences of climate change.

The Movement is fully aware of the severity and urgency of the issue of climate change and its adverse impacts, and acknowledges the challenges faced by developing countries — including but not limited to least developed countries, SIDS and Africa — and the enormous pressure those impacts put on developing countries' national capacities and institutions.

The Movement stresses the importance of fulfilling the international commitments undertaken according to the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. Action must be taken by all, in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities. Developed countries have a historical and particular responsibility to reduce emissions and support developing countries' actions to adapt to and mitigate climate change by providing new, additional and predictable financing, as well as technology transfer and capacity-building.

The Non-Aligned Movement therefore emphasizes that the Council's decision to hold this debate should not be considered a precedent, and that this debate should not result in any form of outcome that undermines the authority or mandate of the relevant bodies, processes and instruments of wider membership that already address climate change.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina): I would like to thank the Secretary-General and Mr. Steiner for their statements. I also particularly welcome the presence here today of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Nauru, Mr. Marcus Stephen.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in the context of today's open debate, held in accordance with the letter dated 1 July from the Permanent Representative of

Germany to the Council (S/2011/408), on the subject of the impact of climate change on the maintenance of international peace and security. The Group of 77 and China wishes to reaffirm its position on this subject.

The Council's primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations. Other issues, including those related to economic and social development, are assigned by the Charter to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The ever-increasing encroachment by the Security Council on the roles and responsibilities of other principal entities of the United Nations represents a distortion of the principles and purposes of the Charter, infringes on their authority and compromises the rights of the general membership of the United Nations.

The Group of 77 and China underlines how important it is that the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council work within their respective mandates, as set out in the Charter.

General Assembly resolution 63/281 recognized the respective responsibilities of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security conferred upon the Security Council and the responsibility for sustainable development issues, including climate change, conferred upon the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and invited the relevant organs of the United Nations, as appropriate and within their respective mandates, to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications. The relevant bodies in the field of sustainable development are the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the relevant subsidiary bodies, including the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Environment Programme.

The Group of 77 and China is of the view that it is vital for all Member States to promote sustainable development in accordance with the Rio Principles, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and fully implement Agenda 21 and the outcomes of other relevant United Nations conferences in the economic, environmental and social fields, including the Millennium Declaration.

We further emphasize the critical role of the international community in the provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building to developing countries.

We maintain that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary international intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change. In that context, we would recall that an appropriate response to this challenge should address not only the consequences but also the roots of the problem. Let me emphasize that there is a strong case for emission reductions and mitigation actions on the part of developed countries so as to avert the adverse impacts of climate change.

In this context, we are extremely concerned that under current climate change negotiations, there has not yet been any clear indication on the part of the developed countries that they will adopt a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol. Moreover, current mitigation pledges from developed countries participating in the UNFCCC negotiations are not sufficient to reduce global greenhouse-gas emissions enough to hold the increase in global average temperature at a level that would accord with what is required by science. Developed countries must be more ambitious in this respect.

We reiterate the need to coordinate international efforts and mobilize partners to assist the observation networks through regional initiatives such as the South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre. In this regard, we call on the relevant agencies and organs of the United Nations, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to reinforce regional broadcasting systems to help island communities during a disaster and increase the effectiveness of observation in those regions. Any measures taken in this context must ensure that an integrated approach is adopted in responding to environmental emergencies.

The response to the impacts of climate change and disasters must include the strengthening of the Hyogo Framework for Action for disaster risk reduction, as well as an increase in assistance to developing countries and affected States, including by supporting efforts to enhance their national and

regional capacities for the implementation of plans and strategies for preparedness, rapid response, recovery and development.

The Group would like to underline the fact that developing countries continue to suffer from the adverse impacts of climate change and the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Developing countries are the most vulnerable to climate change, and support for their efforts needs to be stepped up. In this regard, we call for the full and effective implementation of the commitments under the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

We reiterate that sea-level rise continues to pose a significant risk to small island developing States and to their efforts to achieve sustainable development and that, for some, it represents the gravest of threats to their survival and viability.

The Group of 77 and China will continue to pursue the achievement of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty, which are our first and overriding priorities, as well as the fulfilment of the commitments made by developed countries in all relevant bodies.

We strongly reiterate our expectation that the initiative of the Council to hold this debate will not create a precedent that undermines the authority or mandate of the relevant bodies, processes and instruments that already address these issues in all their complexity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mr. García González (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, we welcome your initiative to convene this open debate of the Security Council on the impact of climate change on the maintenance of international peace and security.

The world is now facing one of the greatest challenges in its entire history. Climate change is directly affecting millions of people, all species and ecosystems in general. Various international forums and organizations have been warning us for many years about the impact of climate change on agriculture, livestock and fisheries, particularly in countries located in tropical and subtropical regions. This had had negative consequences for small-scale rural subsistence economies in marginalized areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

El Salvador and the other Central American countries, owing both to their geographical location and natural environment and to their poverty levels and social deficit, are among the regions that are most vulnerable to and threatened by climate change. Our country is experiencing heavy rainfall, storms, drought and extreme weather events, which are having a negative impact on public resources, the social and economic base of the country and its democratic governance.

Just as serious is the situation of small island developing States (SIDS), which are suffering as a result of the direct impacts of climate change. They are affected mainly by problems that include coastal flooding, the disappearance of some islands into the sea, a reduction in freshwater resources, severe drought, crop losses and an increased incidence of disease, as well as threats to fish stocks, which represent the main food source for many communities in those States. All of the foregoing was stated by His Excellency Mr. Marcus Stephen, President of the Republic of Nauru, speaking on behalf of the SIDS. My country aligns itself fully with his statement.

In the face of such a situation, a greater commitment is necessary on the part of developed countries so as to make progress on negotiations to adopt a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and hence to achieve its objective of reducing greenhouse gases.

Developing countries are the most affected by the adverse effects of climate change, and they are the least responsible for creating this problem. One example of this, according to scientific studies, is the estimate that by 2030, Central America will produce less than 0.5 per cent of greenhouse gases; however, it is already one of the regions that is most vulnerable to the effects of this phenomenon.

Here we should recall the commitment made by the developed countries to provide technical and financial assistance to developing countries to enable them to fulfil their commitments in terms of adaptation to climate change and with respect to the adoption of low-carbon development models.

One of the principles of international law is that no State can exercise its rights if doing so harms another State. International environmental law establishes limits on sovereignty in the sense that no State can use its territory in such a way that causes serious environmental damage to other States. The Framework Convention on Climate Change goes beyond this principle, declaring the change in the Earth's climate a common concern of humanity.

In this context, we welcome the appeal made by the Chair of the Group of 77 and China, Ambassador Argüello of Argentina, for the main bodies of the United Nations, within their mandates as accorded by the Charter of the United Nations, to devote greater efforts to addressing the impact of climate change and its security implications.

In this case, there is a crucial need for the Security Council to clearly recognize the threat that climate change poses for international peace and security and thus be able to respond with appropriate actions to the impacts of this phenomenon in this specific area. Climate change conditions and reduces economic growth and social progress, multiplies and magnifies territorial vulnerability and exacerbates environmental degradation, and thus constitutes a human security problem.

El Salvador is participating in various projects and initiatives at the regional level aimed at reducing vulnerability and adapting to climate change. The Regional Climate Change Strategy is a reflection of the common objective and the position of the Central American countries to tackle head on the challenge posed by climate change and its impact on the population of the region. We appreciate the initiative of the Security Council to debate this important topic, which will require a great deal of political will in multilateral negotiations for positive results to be seen in the medium and long terms.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Pedro Serrano, Acting Head of Delegation the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Serrano (European Union): I thank you, Sir, for giving me to floor to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States and for organizing this important debate.

The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I wish to welcome the participation in this meeting of the President of the Republic of Nauru and to thank him for his important statement. I also thank the Secretary-General and the representative of the United Nations Environment Programme for their presentations.

The European Union and its member States believe that climate change has important security implications, since it acts as a threat multiplier. The scarcity of natural resources, economic damage, sea-level rise, desertification, migratory pressures and energy supply tensions may increase instability in fragile States and pressures on international governance. The European Union and its member States are examining these issues jointly with the United Nations, notably through the United Nations Interagency Framework Team for Preventive Action.

I would like to focus on two issues for our debate today: sea-level rise and food security.

The European Union fully shares the view that small island developing States are among the world's countries hardest hit by climate change. In particular, Pacific islands face unique structural constraints due to the combination of their remoteness, small size, limited natural resources and vulnerability to natural hazards. Adaptation to climate impact is indeed vital for the future of Pacific islanders, but the Pacific Ocean also represents a vital resource for the future of our planet.

In the Pacific area, the European Union has a longstanding development partnership, with 15 countries and 4 overseas countries and territories associated with the European Union. Climate-targeted activities have been addressed through a comprehensive mix of EU policies and instruments. We are currently reflecting on how to further enhance the EU-Pacific development partnership.

Long before any island might be submerged, progressive deterioration may render some islands uninhabitable. We should reflect on a common strategy for the region while considering actions tailored to meet specific needs. Coordination between international

donors and regional bodies will be crucial to ensure efficient implementation.

Increasing global temperatures will multiply extreme weather events such as drought, flooding and tropical cyclones, and their effects will become more intense and destructive. Coastal areas, where urban centres, economic activity, population and critical infrastructure are often located, are particularly vulnerable.

While moving forward towards a global agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, meaningful measures can already be taken. Support to the poorest and most vulnerable countries should come first. Disaster preparedness should be enhanced, as the economic impact of natural disasters significantly curtails sustainable development and thus increases instability and can lead to conflict. Close links between countries' national adaptation plans and their disaster preparedness plans are necessary, and investment in technology and innovation should be promoted.

I move next to food security. Ensuring food security for the world's growing population is one of the major challenges we must address as a global community. The impact of food insecurity is both local and global. It results in the erosion of individual and family livelihoods, breaks up communities and causes malnutrition. It undermines children's and nations' abilities to reach their full potential.

Climate change stands at the centre of a confluence of pressures that will have an impact on food security over the coming decades. It is already having a dramatic impact on crop yields, livestock production and the availability of water. These trends are predicted to worsen in the future and make it ever more unlikely that we will achieve the increase in food production needed to feed the world's growing population.

The cost of not addressing climate change is further instability of food supplies, increased volatility of food prices, additional pressure on water resources and greater migratory pressures — all of which threaten the political stability of already fragile States and risk undermining progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

The European Union and its member States actively support food security through development and humanitarian policies. In March 2010, we adopted a policy framework aimed at strengthening coordination between the EU and its member States in the fight against world hunger and malnutrition. Ensuring that all food security assistance is based on environmentally sustainable practices is a crucial step to achieve success.

As it is clear that the effects of climate change will hit the most vulnerable the hardest, particular attention should be devoted to the empowerment of people and communities facing poverty and hunger with limited resilience, as well as of countries and regions exposed to multiple stress factors and fragile States characterized by weak institutions and vulnerability to conflict.

Work on security implications must proceed in tandem with action to address climate change itself. The EU will continue to do so in the context of its policies for global climate action, development, humanitarian aid, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction.

Just two days ago, on 18 July, the EU Foreign Affairs Council recognized the need to act to reduce systemic risks resulting from climate change before they trigger systemic crises. The Council also noted that climate change and environmental deterioration should be monitored by EU early-warning mechanisms, particularly in vulnerable regions, and called for the work undertaken on climate change and international security to be built upon.

Climate-induced risks are numerous and straddle development and security. Much more analysis remains to be done. We could suggest two issues that merit deeper research: water security and deforestation. Access to water and water availability may be both a great human security threat and a threat to regional stability, which may lead to serious disputes. Forests are a major source of food and subsistence for those who live in forest areas and their surroundings and are an essential means to combat climate change. Unsustainable deforestation may lead not only to displacement of population and environmental degradation, but also to damage to indigenous civilizations and their cultural and spiritual heritage.

In closing, I would like to underscore that the EU remains committed to broadening its understanding and mainstreaming climate change and its security implications in its foreign and security policies.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I therefore intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.